



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

BLACK LEGION

PART # 1 OF 3

PAGES AVAILABLE THIS PART 350



## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

### FILES CONTAINED IN THIS PART

FILE #	PAGES AVAILABLE
<u>61-7398 (Volume 1)</u>	<u>350</u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

KAT:TAM

RECORDED

April 8, 1935

61-755-1

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL KEENAN

With reference to your memorandum of March 19, 1935, transmitting a copy of a letter addressed to the Attorney General, under date of March 5, 1935, by Chief Post Office Inspector K. P. Alarich, and accompanied by a copy of a Confidential report prepared by Inspector J. F. Cordrey of Lima, Ohio, dated February 23, 1935, relating to the existence of an organization known as the "Black Legion", you are advised that I have received no indication that any employees of this Bureau are members of the "Black Legion". It does not appear, therefore, that any action is required of me in connection with this matter, and I am accordingly returning to you the original letter addressed to the Attorney General and the signed copy of Inspector Cordrey's report. I thought you might desire to refer this matter in its entirety to Mr. Stanley.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.

Enclosure #718334

Mr. Nathan .....

Mr. Tolson .....

Mr. E. A. Tamm .....

Mr. Clegg .....

Mr. Glavin .....

Mr. Ladd .....

Mr. Nichols .....

Mr. Rosen .....

Mr. Tracy .....

Mr. Carson .....

Mr. Egan .....

Mr. Gurnea .....

Mr. Hendon .....

Mr. Jones .....

Mr. Quinn .....

Mr. Nease .....

Miss Gandy .....

.....

.....

FILES SECTION  
MAILED

★ APR 8 1935 ★

1 copy P. M.  
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

3

ADDRESS REPLY TO  
"THE ATTORNEY GENERAL"  
AND REFER TO  
INITIALS AND NUMBER

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

JBK *mduh*

202600 - 2866-

March 19, 1935.

MEMORANDUM FOR J. EDGAR HOOVER, DIRECTOR,  
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION

Mr. Nathan.....  
Mr. Tolson.....  
Mr. Backus.....  
Mr. Daughman..  
Chief Clerk.....  
Mr. Clegg.....  
Mr. Coffey.....  
Mr. Edwards.....  
Mr. Egan.....  
Mr. Harbo.....  
Mr. Keith.....  
Mr. Lester.....  
Mr. Quinn.....  
Mr. Schilder.....  
Mr. Smith.....  
Mr. Tamm.....  
Mr. Tracy.....  
Miss Gandy.....

Transmitted herewith please find a copy of a letter dated March 5, 1935, addressed to the Attorney General, from the Office of the Chief Inspector of the Post Office Department, relative to the alleged existence of an organization at Lima, Ohio, known as the "Black Legion", which is said to be revolutionary in its tendency.

An examination of the facts fails to disclose any violation of any Federal law or laws, but the observation has been made that representatives of the Department of Justice are reported to be members of the organization.

This information is forwarded to you for whatever action may seem appropriate in the premises.

Respectfully,

*Joseph B. Keenan*  
Joseph B. Keenan  
Assistant Attorney General.

3 Enclosure: 155104 RECORDED & INDEXED

APR 11 1935

*Return & state there is no indication that any members of Bureau belong & consequently no action needed here. It might be to send it to Stanley. J. D. S.*

ALB 9 1935 P.M.

TAMM ONE FILE

ECO:FTT

1935

March 5, 1935.

The Honorable

The Attorney General.

My dear Mr. Attorney General:

For your information and any action that may be deemed advisable, there is attached copy of a report submitted under date of February 23, 1935, by Post Office Inspector J. W. Cordrey, relative to the alleged existence at Lima, Ohio, of an organization known as the Black Legion, said to be revolutionary in its tendency. The uniform referred to is also being transmitted herewith.

It will be observed that, among others, representatives of the Department of Justice are reported to be members of the Black Legion.

Very truly yours,

For the Postmaster General,

(Signed) K. P. Aldrich

Chief Inspector.

Inclosures.

APR 11 1935

61-7398-1	
APR 9 1935	RECEIVED
U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE	

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT  
Office of InspectorJ. F. Cordrey,  
InspectorCase No.  
Lima, Ohio, February 23, 1935.

1956

Subject: Confidential

Inspector in Charge,  
Cincinnati, Ohio.

1. A few days ago one of the most prominent men of Lima called me by telephone and requested an interview. He stated that it was his desire that the matter be regarded in strict confidence, at least to the extent that his name be not used, but that he believed it to be of sufficient importance to be brought by me to attention of the proper Government Agency.

2. It developed that this man had learned, through a person in his employ, of the existence in Lima of an organization known as the "Black Legion", which he believes to be against the present administration, and revolutionary in its tendency. An interview, at the suggestion of this man, was later had with the informant. It was learned from that young man that he had been a member this outfit, but that he had severed his connection, and that as result thereof his life is in more or less constant jeopardy.

3. I was informed that a person known as Dr. Shepard, Bellaire, Ohio, is the head of the Black Legion in the United States, and that they claim membership of one million five hundred thousand. It was related that the United States is divided into thirteen districts (patterning the thirteen original colonies) with a Major General in charge of each. The initials of Dr. Shepard are not known, but it is stated that this man either has a daughter or sister at Bellaire who is also a doctor. One Bert Effinger (former head of the Ku Klux Klan here) is said to be Major General of this district, and to have charge of all territory west of the Mississippi River. There is no initiation fee, but, it was explained, each member is required to pay Effinger 10 cents each month. These persons are ordinarily referred to, among themselves, as "blacks". The character of dress is black with separate cape effect and black head covering ornamented by white skull and cross bones.

61-7373-1

4. The Chief of Police, also the head of the plain clothes-force, at Lima are said to be members. Neither of these persons were selected for their positions because of any qualification.

5. New members are referred to as privates, and the entire method of organization is along the lines of the army service. A company is represented by 99 men and one Captain.

6. The meeting places at Lima are the "Ford Dance Hall", rooms used by the Junior Order of American Mechanics Lodge, and Harry Tapscott's farm, about halfway between Lima and West Minister. Harry Tapscott is recognized as a Major. Other Majors are Russell Croft, North Pine St., John Frankhouser, 783 So. Broadway, Lima. Captains are named as follows: O.L. Boyd, 1513 St. Johns Ave. Fisher W. Kibby, and one "Rotabarger" who is employed as mechanic for Gibson Co., Lima. Guy Effinger, 114 Harrison Ave., is Lieutenant Colonel, as is also one John Hawk, whose address is given as F.E. RA. (old Federal building).

7. It is stated that this organization is "hiding behind the old Ku Klux Klan and the Junior Order of American Mechanics, and it has recently been referred to in Lima as the "Bullet Club".

8. The method of obtaining members is by approaching a prospect, and asking whether he would like to join a good organization, and to leave the impression that its purpose is "protection" and aid in securing employment. The person approached is told that it is an "all American organization" and is asked to place his confidence in the solicitor. Approximately 80 per cent of the employees of the F.E.R.A. in Lima are said to be "Blacks", and they, without question, are under the control of "Major General Bert Effinger" whose son "Lieutenant Colonel Guy Effinger" is in the regular employ of the F. E. R. A. at Lima.

9. Initiates take the oath with a "Black" standing on each side of him with drawn revolvers pointed at him. They are asked concerning their views of "mob violence" also the lynch law, also whether they will vote as directed. They are asked if they are willing to accept one man (Bert Effinger) as their "judge, jury and advisor". Inquiry is made as to whether they own a horse or automobile, and whether they possess any firearms. If they do not own a revolver, shot gun or rifle they are ordered to obtain a revolver and are instructed to carry it at all times. The maximum penalty for carrying concealed weapons in Ohio is three years imprisonment. They are supposed to take the witness stand and lie for a brother member, or, in the event of jury duty, "hang a jury" if a brother member's interests are involved, regardless of what the charge may be. It is related that Bert Effinger has at least ten men in Lima who will carry out his orders regardless of what they may be. I was told that men who refuse to take oath along these lines find themselves confronted

(Confidential)

-3-

Page 3.

Respectfully referred to the Chief Inspector. The uniform referred to is being transmitted under separate cover.

(stamped) W. R. Briggs, Inspector in Charge.

from all sides by black robed individuals with drawn revolvers; that they are then forcibly removed and threatened with death (some times beaten) if they ever reveal anything they have seen or heard. The only acceptable excuse for failure to attend a meeting is said to be "sickness or absence". "Once a member always a member". New members are given a loaded cartridge as a "token". They are directed to so conduct themselves that there may be no necessity of requesting its return. They are informed that if the cartridge is ever demanded it must be promptly surrendered, and that "half of it will be returned to them". Further that if they resign or abandon the organization their only escape from punishment is "suicide or leave the country".

10. I was told that Dr. Shepard has been heard to say that when the time comes "to take the field" it is not his desire to act in the capacity of surgeon, or words to that effect.

11. It was related that a certain person (former Major in the Black Legion) at Lima, was directed by "Major General Bert Effinger" some time in the past "to take 15 men and put a certain moving picture theatre out of business" merely because of the showing of a moving picture, that did not conform strictly with his views on religion. The Major refused. He demanded that Effinger explain, in the event of a riot or blood shed, who would go their bond, and was informed by Effinger that he (Effinger) would take care of them. The Major now "goes armed to the teeth" to protect himself against "outside members of the 'Black Legion Mob'". Other former members are harassed night and day by automobiles circling their homes. Wives are placed in mortal fear because of inquiries by strange men, in the absence of husbands.

12. I was informed that "Major General Effinger" is tireless in his denunciation of the administration in Washington, and that his trend is toward the views of Stalin in Russia. It does not seem that "privates" and others of lower rank than Major General in the "Black Legion" know what the real purpose of the organization is. As viewed by me it serves no good purpose, and should be thoroughly investigated by the proper Government Agency.

13. It is stated that Bert Effinger boasts that 62 members of the Department of Justice and other Bureaus of the Government are members of the Black Legion.

14. There is transmitted, under separate cover, a uniform of a Major of the "Black Legion".

/s/ J. F. Cordrey,  
Inspector.



AGB:AEK  
RECORDED 61-7398 - 2

April 22, 1935

Special Agent in Charge,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Sir:

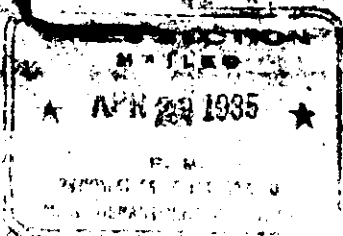
There are transmitted herewith copies of a memorandum received from Mr. William Stanley, the Assistant to the Attorney General, dated April 15, 1935, requesting an investigation with a view to ascertaining the identities of the individuals connected with an organization known as the "Black Legion".

There are also being transmitted copies of a letter addressed to the Inspector in Charge, Cincinnati, Ohio, by J. F. Cordrey, Inspector, Post Office Department, dated February 23, 1935 in regard to this matter. This will be of assistance in conducting the requested investigation.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.

Inclosure No. 839056



Department of Justice  
Washington

April 15, 1935

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HOOVER

Assistant Attorney General Keenan has sent me a memorandum relative to the alleged existence at Lima, Ohio, of an organization known as the "Black Legion", said to be revolutionary in its tendency.

In view of the fact that it is alleged that sixty-two employees of this Department are members of this organization, I wish that you would conduct an investigation with a view to ascertaining who they are.

*William Stanley*

William Stanley  
The Assistant to the Attorney General

RECORDED

APR 25 1935

61-1398-2
FILED
APR 23 1935 A.M.
U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
U.S. OFFICE

*Letter Cleveland  
4/22/35 OJB.*

Mr. Nathan.....  
Mr. Tolson.....  
Mr. Bachus.....  
Mr. Baughman.....  
Chief Clerk.....  
Mr. Clegg.....  
Mr. Coffey.....  
Mr. Edwards.....  
Mr. Egan.....  
Mr. Harbo.....  
Mr. Keith.....  
Mr. Lester.....  
Mr. Quinn.....  
Mr. Schilder.....  
Mr. Smith.....  
Mr. Tamm.....  
Mr. Tracy.....  
Miss Gandy.....

*az*

AGB:CSH:MAM:BR  
61-7398 - 3

May 11, 1935.

Special Agent in Charge,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to Bureau letter dated April 22, 1935, requesting an investigation concerning the identities of individuals connected with an organization known as the "Black Legion".

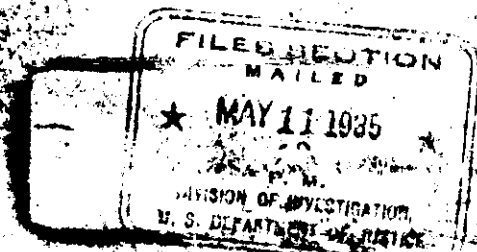
There are being transmitted herewith copies of a letter received from Mr. [REDACTED] Police, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, Baltimore, Maryland, dated April 26, 1935, which apparently pertains to this matter. In the event additional information is desired from Mr. [REDACTED] it is suggested that appropriate leads be indicated for the Washington Field Office.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.

RECORDED

Enclosure #284396.



MAY 11 1935 PM



61-7398-3  
MAY 13 1935  
[Handwritten signature]

STAT:TAH

RECORDED & INDEXED

61-7398-4

May 17, 1935

Mr. [REDACTED]

Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company,  
Baltimore, Maryland.

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]:

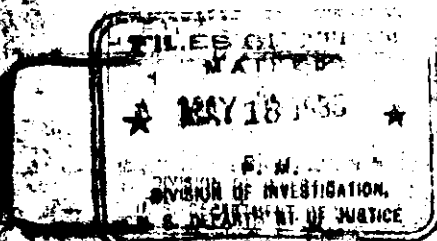
I have received your letter of April 26, 1935, which transmitted a memorandum relating to a secret organization known as the "Black Legion", which is reported to be in existence at Fort Wayne, Indiana. While the facts outlined in this memorandum do not appear to constitute a violation of any Federal Statute coming within the investigative jurisdiction of this Bureau, I am glad to have this information, which is being incorporated in the Bureau's files. In the event additional information is desired concerning this organization, I will instruct a Special Agent of the Bureau to call upon you.

I desire to express my appreciation for your courtesy in transmitting this material to me and to assure you of my desire to cooperate with you at all times in matters of mutual interest.

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.



RECEIVED  
MAY 18 1935

*E. J. T. A.*

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company

The Baltimore and Ohio Chicago Terminal Railroad Company

POLICE DEPARTMENT

R. J. DOYLE, SUPT. POLICE  
NEW YORK TERMINAL LINES, NEW YORK, N. Y.  
E. L. HOWE, SUPT. POLICE,  
EASTERN LINES, BALTIMORE, MD.  
F. J. YOUNG, SUPT. POLICE,  
WESTERN LINES } CINCINNATI, OHIO  
B. & O. C. T. R. R.

BALTIMORE, MD. April 26, 1935.



SUBJECT: Secret organization at Fort Wayne, Ind.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Director,  
Federal Bureau of Investigation,  
Department of Justice,  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:-

I am attaching memorandum concerning a secret  
organization at Fort Wayne, Ind.

I do not know whether or not you will be interested  
in this affair, as at the present moment I am not in position  
to state whether this is purely a local organization or whether  
it has an interstate angle. I would assume that it is of  
interstate character, and I thought you might be interested  
in its activities.

This information comes to me confidentially from  
one of my Division Captains, and while the Baltimore & Ohio R.R.  
has no direct interest in the matter, our department endeavors  
to keep in touch with any activities that might be of interest  
to any law-enforcing agency.

I am in position to get further information concerning  
this organization, if the matter is of sufficient interest to  
you.

DECLASSIFIED BY 6080

ON 9-30-77

LEP/bia

MAY 21 1935

Yours very truly,

RECORDED

&amp;

INDEXED

Baltimore, April 26, 1935.

Information was received to the effect that during the last few weeks solicitation was made to various persons to join a secret organization at Ft. Wayne, Ind.

This organization meets every Saturday night at 8:30 on the third floor of the building directly across the street from the Majestic Theatre, Ft. Wayne.

The organization is known as "The Black Legion." There are no membership dues or fees, a collection being taken up at each meeting, and other contributions are solicited.

Men initiated into this organization are called "Recruits" and are made "Black Knight" by initiation, the officers being known as Chief, Colonel, and Major, all of whom are armed during the meeting. The countersign is similar to a military salute, and the pass-words are "Elect only Americans to office." All members are asked what arms they possess and whether they are willing to secure arms and ammunition and use them at the command of the officers of the organization. The word "Luxor", followed by the name of a city or other location, will constitute a command that members report at that place, armed.

As a badge, the members are presented with a 38 calibre pistol cartridge. Examination of this cartridge fails to show any peculiar marks on the shell.

On April 20th the speaker at the meeting was a peg-legged man, his left leg being amputated, also his right thumb. This man derided both political parties, all fraternal organizations, and all churches. This meeting was attended by about 175 men, and about 25 candidates were initiated.

All persons connected with this organization are very close-mouthed. The members were warned that the penalty for disloyalty to the organization is death.

61-7398-4

# Federal Bureau of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice  
1448 Standard Building  
Cleveland, Ohio

June 1, 1935

m  
2  
Director  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
U. S. Department of Justice  
Pennsylvania Ave. at 9th NW  
Washington, D. C.

Re: BLACK LEGION  
Miscellaneous  
Confidential

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to report of Special Agent S. E. Smith, dated 5-24-35, relative to the above-captioned case, wherein it is stated that one 45 calibre Colt Automatic pistol, with identifying numbers on same obliterated, had been obtained from a former member of the Legion.

The gun in question is being forwarded, under separate cover, and it is requested that the same be given appropriate laboratory examination in an endeavor to ascertain number of same for the purpose of tracing the gun to its last owner.

Very truly yours,

*J. P. MacFarland*  
J. P. MAC FARLAND  
Special Agent in Charge

CES:h

RECORDED  
&  
INDEXED

JUN 8 1935

61-1371-5  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
JUN 5 1935  
TWO  
FILE

Copy and Specimens Retained in Laboratory

CH 6/6

*Parsons  
Harrington*

GENERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

#

4607

Laboratory Report

June 12, 1935.

Case:

Black Legion;  
Miscellaneous;  
Confidential.

Number:

61-7398-5

Specimens:

One 45 calibre Colt Automatic revolver with number obliterated.

Examination requested by:

Cleveland Bureau Office.

Date received:

June 6, 1935.

Examination requested:

Ballistic

Result of examination:

Examination by: ~~Barling~~

Test cartridges have been fired in the above gun. These test bullets and shells have been compared with all evidence specimens of that type contained in the files of the Bureau's Laboratory, but no identification was effected.

These test specimens will be filed in the Laboratory for possible future reference.

The serial number was restored and found to be #251440.

There was also restored the inscription "United States Property", which establishes this gun as government property.

This gun will be retained in the Laboratory collection of firearms.

5 - Director.

2 - Cleveland.

2 - Laboratory.



REJ:CDW  
61-7398 - 6

RECORDED

June 29, 1935.

Special Agent in Charge,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

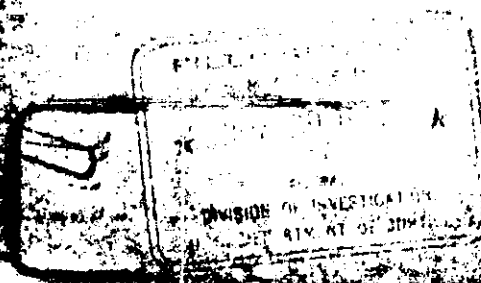
Dear Sir:

Reference is made to the Bureau's letter of June 14, 1935, enclosing the laboratory report dated June 12, 1935, in connection with one .45 calibre Colt Automatic with number obliterated, which was subsequently found to be 251440.

A review has been made of the Bureau's files, but there was found no record concerning this gun.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.



EAH:BC

June 14, 1935.

RECORDED

61-7398-6

Special Agent in Charge,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Re: Black Legion;  
Miscellaneous;  
Confidential.

Dear Sir:

There is transmitted herewith the laboratory report covering the examination of specimens submitted by your office in connection with the above entitled matter and received in the Division June 6, 1935.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.

Enclosure: #584034.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

# 4607

Laboratory Report

June 12, 1935.

Case: *D*  
Black Legion;  
Miscellaneous;  
Confidential.

Number 61-7398-5

Specimens:

One 45 calibre Colt Automatic revolver with number obliterated.

Examination requested by: Cleveland Bureau Office.

Date received: June 6, 1935.

Examination requested: Ballistic

Result of examination:

Examination by: *Harrington*

Test cartridges have been fired in the above gun. These test bullets and shells have been compared with all evidence specimens of that type contained in the files of the Bureau's Laboratory, but no identification was effected.

These test specimens will be filed in the Laboratory for possible future reference.

The serial number was restored and found to be #251440.

There was also restored the inscription "United States Property", which establishes this gun as government property.

This gun will be retained in the Laboratory collection of firearms.

3 - Director.  
2 - Cleveland.  
2 - Laboratory.

RECORDED  
&  
INDEXED

61-7398-6

JUL 6 1935

U.S.

*one*  
*per*

FILE

AGB:RD  
71-7398  
61-7339

61-7398-7

June 15, 1935

RECORDED

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,  
MR. WILLIAM STANLEY

Your attention is invited to your memorandum dated April 15, 1935 relative to the alleged existence at Lima, Ohio of an organization known as the Black Legion, which is said to be revolutionary in its tendency.

There is transmitted herewith a copy of the report of Special Agent C. E. Smith dated at Cleveland, Ohio, May 24, 1935 concerning this matter.

Very truly yours,

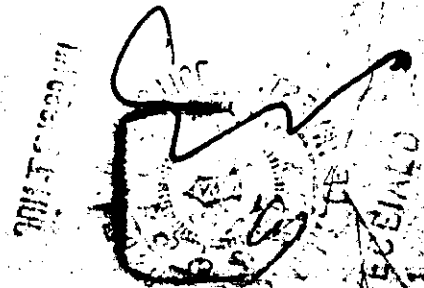
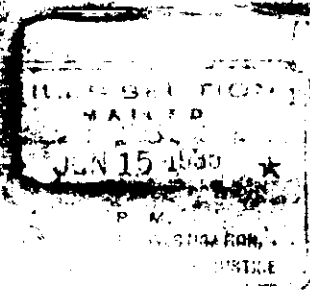
John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.

Enclosure 307608

DECLASSIFIED BY 6080  
ON 9-30-77

LEO/bia

declassified file  
10-3-77 BSN/n



316

DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION  
FROM: UNIT #1 & UNIT #3

1934.

TO: Director  
Mr. Nathan  
Mr. Tolson  
Mr. Edwards  
Unit Two

Unit Four  
Files Section  
Personnel Files  
Equipment Section  
Chief Clerk's Office

Unit Five  
Identification Unit  
Statistical Section  
Technical Laboratory

SUPERVISORS

Unit One  
Mr. Listerman  
Mr. Lowdon  
Mr. McKee  
Mr. Newby  
Mr. Richmond  
Mr. Thompson

Unit Three  
Mr. Deaderick  
Mr. Joseph  
Mr. Smith

*Return file to*  
*Bureau*

Miss Gandy  
Mrs. Kelley  
Washington Field Office  
Stenographic Pool  
Secretary  
Correct  
Re-write  
Re-date  
See me  
Send file

*Send copy of Serial 3 of  
61-7333 to Cleveland  
for info. ; also suggest lead  
for Mr. Benton.*

E. A. TAMM - Room 5107

21

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **CLEVELAND, OHIO**

FILE NO. **62-3**

ah

REPORT MADE AT <b>CLEVELAND, OHIO</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>5/24/35</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>5/21/35</b>	REPORT MADE BY <b>E. C. R. SMITH</b>
TITLE <b>BLACK LEGION NIGHT RIDERS BULLET CLUB</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>MISCELLANEOUS - Confidential</b>

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:**

Secret organization national in scope and military in nature, apparently organized by Dr. Shepard, of Bellaire, O. Membership restricted to native-born, white, gentile, protestant citizens. Former members state organization is revolutionary and is terrorizing former members for withdrawing. General of organization, at Lima, O., has ordered subordinates to wreck picture shows, burn roadhouses and assault individuals. Organization purports to have completely equipped machine gun company in Detroit, Mich. Former members advise 80% of FERA employees at Lima, O., are members and relief in district is controlled by head or order. Chief of Police, Lima, is reputed to be a member; General of Legion, Lima, stated to former member that 60 to 70 members of Department Justice were members; also stated that Cincinnati, O., agent was admitted to order fall '34. Event of unknown nature scheduled for Nov. 20-26. Ritual, organization and partial list of members set forth.

- P. -

DECLASSIFIED BY **6080**

ON **4-30-77**

*LED/bia*

**REFERENCES:**

Bureau letters dated 4-22-35 and 5-11-35.

**DETAILS:**

**AT LIMA, OHIO**

Agent interviewed Mr. J. F. Cordrey, Post Office Inspector, stationed at Lima, Ohio, who advised he had been approached on numerous

APPROVED AND FORWARDED <i>[Signature]</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES
COPIES OF THIS REPORT ③ - Bureau 2 - Detroit 2 - Cincinnati 3 - Cleveland <i>Director 6/12/35</i> <i>6/12/35</i> <i>2-10-35</i>	<div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">61 7398</div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <b>MAY 27 A.M.</b> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <b>JUN 18 1935</b>  <b>JUN 20 1935</b> </div> </div>

occasions in the past by various individuals who had requested an investigation of a secret order known as the Black Legion, and more popularly known locally as the Bullet Club.

According to Mr. Cordrey, several ex-members had complained to him that since they had refused to go to the meetings machine loads of men had night-ly driven past their homes and prowlers had gone to the extent of peering in their windows; that their women folk had become frightened by strange men calling during their husbands' absence and various other activities that served to intimidate the ex-members.

Mr. Cordrey further advised agent that a man known by the name of Bert Effinger, former head of the Ku Klux Klan, in Lima, O., was apparently the head of the organization in the district and was known as "General Effinger" and his son, Guy, was "Lt. Colonel", employed by the Federal Emergency Relief Association in Lima. Cordrey stated he had occasion to call upon Mr. Effinger about the time it became known that the ex-members had complained to him, and Effinger during the time he was conversing with Cordrey was called by his son on the telephone, saying, "Father, that man is not to leave the house for a half hour". Their conversation, (Cordrey and Effinger, Sr.,) took place in latter's office, located in the basement of his home. Cordrey stated that the call was made apparently to try and frighten him, but he advised Effinger he would leave whenever he saw fit to do so.

Continuing, Cordrey stated that Effinger had called at his office a short time back and gave him a letter, which reads as follows:

1114 Harrison Ave.  
Lima, Ohio  
May 3rd, 1935

"Mr. J. F. Cordry  
Postal Inspector  
Lima, Ohio

Dear Sir:

"Referring to our conversation some time back concerning the activities of certain men in and around Lima, Ohio, I am presenting to you the names of men, a part of which have been closely connected with the only registered Communist in Allen County, Ohio.

Mr. George Armstrong  
Mr. Kenneth Carter  
Mr. George Pratt  
Mr. George Scheid

A man by the name of Sanders or Sonders.

"A man by the name of Martin, who is reported to be a State or Federal Officer, spends a great deal of his time at the Cook residence, which is his God-given right, and seems to be directing some of their unamerican activities according to the statement of Mrs. Cook.

62-3

"I hereby pledge alligience to the Stars and Stripes our flag, the United States of America, the republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice to all.

"Thanking you for your patience, and wishing you God-speed and success in your efforts to do good, I am

Truly yours in all things

Honorable

7s/ V. H. Effinger."

The original of the above letter was turned over to agent by Mr. Cordrey and is retained in the files of this case at Cleveland, Ohio.

With reference to the persons mentioned in the letter by Effinger as being connected with Communists, Cordrey advised that [redacted] was an employee of the [redacted] in Lima and a former [redacted] of the Legion and one of the persons who had complained to him about the organization. [redacted] was a respectable business man and a former officer of the Legion, and at present one of the moving spirits behind the fight to expose the Legion; [redacted] of Cordrey's and had at one time served a sentence at Atlanta for violation, National Motor Vehicle Theft Act, but since his release in '29 had endeavored to go straight and had assisted him materially on several occasions when he needed information on various matters regarding the underworld. This man became a member of the Legion at the request of John B. Martin, former investigator for the FERA at the time threats had been made to blow up the Old Post Office Building. Mr. [redacted] was also a former member of the Legion and had been discriminated against in the matter of relief and had been harassed to such an extent by the mysterious actions of other members of the Legion that his wife had called upon practically every Law enforcement agency in the county and city for assistance in breaking up the organization. Relative to the discrimination against Mr. [redacted] by the FERA, Cordrey stated that [redacted] had given out that information but Cordrey had no direct evidence bearing upon it.

Mr. Cordrey further stated he did not know the Armstrong or Sanders mentioned in the letter, but advised that the Martin mentioned was J.B. Martin, investigator for the FERA.

At Agent's request Mr. Cordrey had Mr. [redacted] come to his office, where he was questioned by the writer and [redacted] said he was a [redacted] residing at [redacted] and had joined the Black Legion about three years ago and had worked up until he became a [redacted] in the order. [redacted] further stated when he joined there were 12 members in the order in Allen County, but it had since grown to about 3000 and that when he first joined he had been told that the order was to be a patriotic one and against all sorts of Communism and other isms but at the present time it was distinctly revolutionary in that the heads of the organization were attempting to use it to gain control of various Gov-



ernment agencies.

Continuing, Mr. [redacted] stated that after he became [redacted] he started to disagree with some of the policies of General Bert Effinger and finally broke away from the order about a year ago, when Effinger had ordered him to take 20 men go to the Sigma Theatre in Lima, Ohio, and there destroy a film that was being shown.

Mr. [redacted] stated that the name of the picture was the "White Angel" and Effinger objected to it on the grounds that it upheld the Catholic faith. According to [redacted], he had heard a discussion in the basement of Effinger's home on the advisability of taking over the Federal Buildings by the Legion and had also heard Effinger brag about the Legion burning down a roadhouse known as the "Twin Oaks", which was located about three miles south of Lima, Ohio, on US Route 25, as well as the burning of the "Imperial Roadhouse" located on US Route 25, near Wapakoneta, Ohio. Mr. [redacted] advised the writer that after he had dropped out of the order he had been approached on numerous occasions and warned that he had better look out and on one occasion during the winter of '34 about 50 carload of men had collected around his house, and he had been forced into calling several of his friends to stay with him for protection; further stated that he now went armed and had warned Effinger that if anything happened to either Carter, Pratt or a man by the name of Albert Urfer, who is also a former member, he, Effinger would be the next one to get it.

Mr. [redacted] was contacted by agent [redacted] and he advised that he had been a member of the Black Legion and had attended the meetings until about 7 weeks ago when he became disgusted with the revolutionary tactics of the order; [redacted] stated he was a private of the Foot Legion of the Night Riders, a degree of the Black Legion; according to [redacted] a select number of the Blacks, as all members of the Legion are known to each other, was banded together in a unit known as the "Bullet Club."

According to [redacted] a John B. Martin, investigator for the FERA, who lives at Sandusky, O., had been investigating the FERA at Lima, Ohio, after a rumor had started that the Bullet Club was going to blow up the Old Post Office Building and [redacted] had been hired by Mr. J. C. Timberlake, former supervisor of the FERA, to find out what and where the connection was that existed between employees of the FERA and the Black Legion, and during the course of his investigation he had found that about 90% of the FERA employees were members of the organization and Guy Effinger, son of V. H. Effinger, was a Lt. Colonel of the organization and travelling timekeeper for the FERA.

Continuing, Mr. [redacted] advised that after he became a member of the Legion he had been handed a penciled note written on the back of a daily report form of the State Emergency Relief Administration, reading,

Earl Priestap, Jr., "John has got the rawhide now. /s/ Russ" - by Russell Croft, a traveling timekeeper for the FERA. According to [redacted] Priestap is a member of the Black Legion and so is Russ, meaning Russell Croft.

The above-mentioned note was turned over to agent by Mr. Cordrey, who had received it from [redacted] and same is being retained in the files of this case. Mr. Cordrey also gave agent a due card of the Legion, which is made as an ACCIDENT INSURANCE PROSPECT CARD, and same is being retained in the files of this case.

The John mentioned in the above note is, according to [redacted] John Hawk, a foreman of the FERA. [redacted] further stated that on one occasion he had been called on the "carpet" by General Effinger and was accused of talking to Federal men and had been told by the General that all Federal men who came to Lima had to report their arrival to him, and, in the future, any Federal men that [redacted] saw he was to immediately report their presence in the town to the General. [redacted] later found out through J. Martin that a Roy Hoover, janitor of 210 1/2 West Market St., and also a Black had notified Martin that two "Feds" were in town; subsequent investigation by Martin revealed that the two "Feds" names were Fleming and Madden. (It will be noted here that Fleming and Madden are the names of the two State Prohibition men who worked this territory and are mentioned in the Brekid file in connection with the investigation of that case in the Toledo, O., district.)

Later in the day Mr. [redacted] called at agent's hotel room with two men who were introduced as [redacted] a Major in the Legion and Mr. [redacted] a former Captain of the Legion.

Agent questioned [redacted] and [redacted] relative to their knowledge of the Legion, who stated they had joined the Legion about two years ago, when it was held up as a patriotic organization that had been formed to combat the various isms that were then gaining a foothold in the country, but had been forced to withdraw when they had been ordered to commit several felonious acts.

[redacted] stated he had been ordered by General Bert Effinger to burn the roadhouse known as "Peacock Inn", but had refused to do so and had later been ordered by the General to steal some dynamite from a job that the General was watchman on. [redacted] was unable to advise agent for what purpose the dynamite was to be used. According to [redacted] a man had recently come to him and stated he had been approached by a man, named Homer Taylor, who requested the man to place his confidence in him and join an organization that could within a very short period of time have thousands of men marching on Washington. [redacted] stated that Taylor was a Major of the Legion, and he had advised the man not to have anything to do with him; further stating he had caused about 50 men to become members of the

Legion, but had since convinced them that he had been wrong in his beliefs and had caused them to drop out, but that owing to the manner in which the Legion had been intimidating those who had dropped out they could not talk for fear of reprisals.

Continuing, Mr. [redacted] stated he had on numerous occasions heard Effinger state that about 60 or 70 members of the Department of Justice were members of the Legion and related that about Nov. 1934 there had been a rumor that the Bullet Club of the Legion was going to blow up the old Post Office and, as a result of that rumor, a Department of Justice man from Cincinnati, O., had conducted an investigation, which resulted in the detention and questioning of a Black by the name of Kane, who was later released, and Effinger stated to [redacted] that the agent was joining the Legion and would be initiated that week. [redacted] was unable to furnish agent with the date of Kane's detention or the name of the agent; however, [redacted] stated that, as he recalled it, his name was "Smith".

Agent was further advised by Mr. [redacted] that Effinger had a large yellow map at his home he kept in the rafters of the basement, and according to Effinger, it was a map of the location of all of the secret fortifications of the country. In this connection, [redacted] stated that Effinger had told him that under the Statue of Liberty were concealed several large coast defense guns of the disappearing type.

Agent was further advised by Mr. [redacted] that General Effinger had told him that the Detroit, Mich., unit of the Legion had one fully-equipped company of machine guns and one battalion of (Blacks) equipped with army rifles. [redacted] further advised agent that about two years ago he had attended target practice of the Legion at Bowling Green, Ohio, and while there had been introduced to General UPPS, (phonetic spelling), who was introduced as a Government man. [redacted] was unable to state what department of the Government that UPPS was with, but described him as 40 years old, 5' 10" in ht., dark hair, with dark complexion, and driving a Ford V-8 Sedan. Agent was further advised at the same time he met an ex-Detroit police officer by the name of IKE WHITE, who lost his leg in a gun battle with the Purple Gang. White is also supposed to be a member of the Legion.

Continuing, [redacted] advised the writer that the Legion was continually striving to have its members join the National Guard; in this connection, writer advised by Mr. [redacted] that he had once been ordered by General Effinger to so distribute his men that each guardsman would be covered by several Blacks and when the time came to take over the Armory and capture the rifles and ammunition the Blacks assigned to each guardsman was to overcome them, in order to insure the capture of the guns. [redacted] further stated that he had overheard Effinger and others discussing the son of Dr. E. H. Leech, 144 Lakewood Avenue, who was supposed to own a Thompson submachine gun, and they were planning to pose as Federal men and call upon him and confiscate the gun for the Legion. [redacted] also informed agent that he had heard that a driver in town had a machine gun, but he had no additional information the identity of the man.

During the course of the interrogation [redacted] exhibited to agent a 45 cal. Colt Automatic pistol, which he stated he had purchased from Charles Hartzog for \$8.00, further stating that the same gun had been given to [redacted] by Hartzog, together with 65 cartridges and had been later taken away by Hartzog. At the time Hartzog gave the gun to [redacted] he stated that "they" had taken it in a raid on some Catholics in another county. Agent examined this gun and found that both the secret number and the number of the outside of the gun had been filed off. In view of the fact that some thefts of the above-described guns have been reported from various armories, agent requested the gun and same will be forwarded to the Laboratory for examination.

[redacted] informed the writer he had been ordered at one time by General Effinger to "bash in the head" of a man, because he would not attend meetings.

Both [redacted] and [redacted] advised agent that at the last meeting on May 14, '35, the Blacks had been instructed to secure arms and be prepared to expect something between November 20th and 26th of the year. Agent was unable to secure any information as to what that "something" was.

Continuing [redacted] advised that about a year ago he had personally disarmed Ward Taylor, Chief of Police, when he was being admitted into the Legion, further stating that on one occasion the Lima police had received a broadcast relative to a holdup and had picked up several men in a machine answering the description of the holdup getaway car, but subsequent investigation had revealed that the men were Blacks just returning from a meeting and despite the fact that they were all armed they had been released without being charged. [redacted] further stated that it was impossible to get the local police to do anything regarding the terrorist methods of the Black Legion, in view of the fact that both the Chief of Police and the head of the Plain Clothes' force were Blacks.

Mr. [redacted] supplied agent with a 38 cal. lead-nosed short bullet made by the U.S.C. Co. for the 38 S&W, and same is being forwarded to the Bureau laboratory for investigation.

According to Mr. [redacted] a like bullet is furnished each Recruit being admitted to membership in the Black Legion, and they are told upon its presentation that they are to so conduct themselves that it will never be necessary for the Legion to ask for its return and in the event that its return is asked one-half of it will be returned, meaning the LEAD end.

Mr. [redacted] advised agent that one of the rules of the Legion is that the only way that one can ever sever his connection with it is to leave the country or commit suicide; further stated that after he left the order [redacted] whose identity was not known to him, left a note on his doorstep, advising him to either commit suicide or leave the country. The note was not mailed.

Agent was further informed by Mr. [redacted] Mr. [redacted] and Mr. [redacted] that they had heard of whipping squads, hanging squads and killing squads

62-5

in the order and stated that at the present time there were eight names on the death list, whose death warrants had been signed by General Sloan of Sidney, Ohio, who is an employee of the State Highway Department.

The following information relative to the history, ritual, organization, officers, members and meeting places of the Order were furnished agent by Messrs. [redacted] and Scheld.

The Black Legion, historical in itself, was first formed prior to the Revolutionary War, and it was this organization that organized the Boston Tea Party, after the Colonies won their independence; there being no more need for the existence of the Order it disbanded; however, those who were Generals at that time, there being one General for each of the 13 colonies, handed down their rank to their sons, and thus the order was kept alive. The next time that the Order felt it must become active was immediately after the Civil War, and a band of gorillas under Quantrell was organized and operated until they had satisfactorily straightened out the country. It was again disbanded and has now been reorganized as the country is once again being threatened by various sorts of ISMS. \*(Note: the above is part of the speech made by General Kffinger at meetings.)

#### RITUAL and INITIATION:

Members are armed and masked, recruits are lined up for preliminary questions and oath. Grounds are patrolled by masked armed guards.

#### CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD:

1. Are you a native-born, white, gentile, protestant citizen?
2. Do you understand that this organization you are about to join is strictly secret and military in character?
3. This organization is classed by our enemies as an outlaw organization; are you willing to join such an organization?

(The above questions are asked each recruit.)

#### PRELIMINARY OATH:

on  
Kneel your right knee; place your left hand over your heart and raise your right hand; repeat after me: (Say I and repeat your name.)

"Do solemnly promise and swear that I will never reveal any part or portion of the work I have already received or that which is about to be commutated to me. I further promise and swear I will never reveal a single word of anything that has transpired here tonight or the identify of anyone I may recognize in case I am refused membership in this organization. The penalty for violation of this oath is - DEATH.

(The recruits having passed this test and placed under oath are now taken before the larger body of Night Riders and surrounded by armed masked men.)

QUESTIONS BY COLONEL:

Address of Captain to Colonel presenting Recruits:

(Military Salute by Captain):

I present these recruits for further interrogation; they have answered the preliminary questions satisfactory and have come well-recommended by friends in this organization; they have been bound by oath not to reveal anything that transpires here tonight or the identity of anyone they may recognize in case they are refused admission to this organization."

1. What is your name?
2. Where do you live?
3. How old are you?
4. Are you a protestant?
5. What church do you belong to, or believe in?

LECTURE BY CHAPLAIN:

"This organization is one of chivalry and daring, following footsteps of the gorilla bands of the south and is based on southern chivalry; by our enemies were classed as outlaws and outlaws we are, indeed; we have no charter; if we were chartered, our roster would have to be available at all times. You have already signified your willingness to join such an organization. We class as our enemies all negroes, Jews, Catholics and anyone owing any allegiance to any foreign potentate. We fight as gorillas, using any weapon that may come to our hand, preferably the ballot, and, if necessary, by bearing arms. The Republican party are in the grasp of the rich, while the Democrats seem to be in the clutches of the Pope. Our forefathers won this land from the savages and paid for it with their blood. The purpose of war is to kill, for did not God make it honorable to kill; did he not cast Lucifer out of Heaven. Our purpose is to tear down, lay waste, destroy and kill our enemies without mercy as long as one enemy remains alive or breath remains. Black Knights come to the sign of the Death Head and the slogan of a Night-Rider is - UNTIL DEATH.

QUESTIONS BY COLONEL:

Will you accept an order and go to your death, if necessary, to carry it out?

Will you accept for your bed the earth, your roof the sky, your reward-Death?

Will you oppose with the ballot and, if necessary, by bearing arms any attempt to place public tax money in the hands of Roman Catholics for use in their schools or use in their buildings or institutions?

Will you accept one man as your Judge, Jury and Attorney for the Defense?

Do you believe in the separation of church and state?  
Will you lie to protect a comrade in this organization, if ordered to do so by your superior officer?

To what political organization do you now belong? Will you forget your party and vote for the best man if ordered to do so by your superior officer?

Can you keep a secret?

(On the last question a phoney password is passed around and one of the Blacks purposely repeats it, and then he is taken out and hung before all the recruits; a special harness is used and the rope is hooked on; a strap in the back; in the dark it looks like a true hanging. Carter stated that he has frequently been the victim in this act.)

COLONEL to LIEUT. COLONEL:

"Do you think these men have shown their fitness to join this organization by their answers to questions?" Answer: "Sir, I wish to subject these men to further questioning, have I your permission?" Answer: "You have."

QUESTIONS BY LIEUT. COLONEL:

"Can you ride a horse and shoot a rifle?"

"Are you properly armed?"

"Will you properly arm yourself as soon as possible?"

"Do you believe in Lynch Law?"

"Will you sign your name in Blood?"

LIEUT. COLONEL TO COLONEL:

"Sir, these men have answered all questions properly, and if they are bound by the oath that we are bound by - they are acceptable tome."

BLACK OATH:

Kneel on your right knee; place your left hand over your heart; raise your right arm, repeat after me: (Orders are then given to cover these men with loaded guns, and if they fail or falter, you know your duty.)

"In the name of God and Devil and by the power of light and darkness, good and evil, here under the black arch of heavens avenging symbol, I pledge and consecrate my body, my limbs, my heart and my mind and sweat by all powers of Heaven and Hell that I will devote my life to the obedience of my superior officers in this organization and that I will never betray a comrade in this organization. I further promise and swear that I will destroy, without mercy, all FEDERALS, Jay Hawkers and their abettors, whose serpent trail has winnowed the fair fields of our allies and sympathizers; these I will fight without mercy as long as breath remains. Before divulging a single word or implied pledge of this, my solemn oath, and obligation, I will pray to an avenging God and unmerciful Devil that

my limbs be broken with stones and cut off by inches; that they may be food for carion birds; that my body be ripped open and my bowels torn out and fed to the foulest birds of the air, and that my head be split open and my brains scattered over the earth, my heart be torn out and roasted over flames of sulphur. And, lastly, may my soul be given unto torment, may it be submerged in a molten metal and stifled in the flames of Hell, and may this punishment be meted out to me through all eternity."

#### SIGNS AND PASS WORDS:

Pass word: PUT (name of place) Americans only on guard.

Call word: LIXTO (When this word is received by a Black Knight, either by word of mouth, telephone, telegraph or mail, he is supposed to drop anything he is doing and take up arms and go to the place named: for instance, if a call was made for Cleveland, the word would be LIXTO, CLEVELAND)

Test word: (Under the star of the guard, which is answered by the party approached saying -Until Death).

Signs: At night-time either a flashlight, match or auto head-lights are flashed three times, and if the party flashed is a Black, he will answer with three flashes. In day-time the hat is pushed back on the head three times and is answered the same way. Any sign may be used in multiples of three and must be answered the same way.

Two copies of the above ritual were furnished to agent by Mr. [redacted] and Mr. [redacted]; however, it will be noted that the part where the candidate is asked if he will accept one man to be his Judge, Jury and Attorney for the defense is not in it; Mr. [redacted] stated that at the present time that question is asked and has, therefore, been placed in the above.

#### DEGREES:

1. Lowest rank - Foot Legion
2. - Night Riders
3. - Black Knight
4. - Armed Guard
5. - Bullet Club (consists<sup>of</sup> only selected Black Knights)

#### ORGANIZATION:

1. Squad - consists of 6 men and a corporal.
2. Company - consists of 72 privates, 18 corporals, 6 sergeants, 1 2d lieut., 1 1st lieut. and 1 captain.
3. Battalion - consists of 3 companies and is commanded by a major
4. Regiment - consists of 3 battalions and is commended by a Colonel.



Lieut. Colonels, Major Generals and Brigadier Generals are assistants to the General, who is in charge of one thirteenth of the U. S. In this connection, Mr. [redacted] stated that he had heard that Senator Huey Long of La. was a General. However, he was unable to state who had told him, but did state that General Effinger had distributed about \$20 worth of Long's speeches to the membership.

PARTIAL LIST OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS

Dr. Shepard	Bellaire, Ohio	Organizer and reputed head of Legion
Claude Sutter	" "	Assistant to Dr. Shepard
Mrs. Dr. Shepard	" "	Sister of Dr. Shepard and head of woman's auxiliary
Bert Effinger	Lima, Ohio	Major General, in charge of all territory -Lima, O. to west coast.
Jack Frankhouser	" "	Major and body to Effinger
Charles Hartzog	" "	1st Lieut. sold 45 automatic to Carter
O. L. Boyd	" "	Intelligence Squad, works at Lima, News as a foreman; News is only paper in Lima.
Mei Nevergall	Unknown	Captain
Guy Effinger	Lima, Ohio	Lt. Colonel, son of General Effinger and travelling timekeeper for FERA.
Frank Barber	Unknown	Colonel
Harry Tapscot	near Lima	Lt. Colonel; meetings are held on his farm several houses containing dynamite are located here. Supposed to belong to a Mr. Jones, a hardware man.
(?) Rodaburger	not known	Captain
Russell Croft	Lima, Ohio	Major, travelling timekeeper for FERA
L. E. Doty	Lima, Ohio	Major, Principal of Jefferson School
Homer Taylor	not known	Major
Bill Fisher	Lima, Ohio	Captain
Wm. Leffler	not known	Major
Ray Clemens	Lima, Ohio	Captain, bodyguard of Effinger's
Wilbur Sherritts	" "	Captain and member of Intelligence Squad
Dale Archer	" "	Lieut., works for FERA
Bob Roush	" "	Captain, FERA timekeeper
Roy Hoover	" "	Lieut., janitor, 210 1/2 W. Market St.
Cransom McClure	not known	
Homer Murry	Lima, Ohio	FERA employee

John Parkins	Lima, Ohio	
Ed. Dubler	" "	
Walter Jackson	" "	
Don Painter	" "	
Ed. Wise	" "	
(?) Joseph	" "	
Roy Diltz	" "	Political contact man
Ward Taylor	" "	Chief of Police, Lima, O.
(?) Sloan	Sidney	General, employee State Highway Dept., supposed to sign all death warrants of errant members.
Bill Zimmerman	Lima, O.	Former FERA paymaster
Glen Webb	" "	Present FERA paymaster
Dick Adams	" "	Employed by FERA
(?) Marsh	" "	" " "
Ed Worthington	" "	" " " as janitor
L. M. Neal	" "	" " " as door watchman
Stewart Gaugh	" "	" " "
(?) McGinnis	" "	" " " night man
(?) Riley	" "	" " " in transfer office
(?) Simone	" "	" " " Electrical foreman
Amy McGinnis	Lima, Ohio	" " " as nurse (aux'lry lodge)
Mrs. Shafer	" "	" " " telephone switchboard (in aux.lodge)

#### MEETING PLACES in LIMA, OHIO

Old Ford Dance Hall, Findlay Rd and Sugar St.  
 Order United American Mechanics Hall, N. Main and Wayne  
 Ku Klux Klan Hall, South Central St.  
 132 E. 5th - only a company meeting place.  
 Tapscot Farm, Bellefontaine Rd., 3 miles east of Lima, O.  
 Old P.O. Bldg., used by the FERA at present; basement used for meetings of FERA employees.  
 Gridersville Town Hall, 7 miles south of Lima, O., (The marshal is a member.)

DATES OF MEETINGS AND ROSTER OF MEMBERS:

There are not stated meetings; same are called by the officers at their will and the word is passed around by mouth. The only roster of members kept is that in the possession of each Captain: ie, a list of the members of his company.

The following addresses were obtained by agent from Mr. Cordrey, who stated that they were the return addresses on mail that had been recently received by Bert Effinger:

521 North County Line St.,	Fostoria, Ohio
1716 Richardson St.	Ft. Wayne, Indiana
37 Campau St., NW	Grand Rapids, Mich.
1810 Munsford Road	Toledo, Ohio
American Progress Pub-	
lishing Co.,	New Orleans, La.
202 Georgia Ave.,	Bowling Green, Ohio
Box 828	Columbus, Ohio
15877 Indiana Avenue	Detroit, Michigan
H. S. Kemsell,	
Log Cabin Kamp,	Cadiz, Ohio
319 Stearns Avenue	Dashler, Ohio

UNDEVELOPED LEADS:

The CINCINNATI, Ohio, office will at Columbus, Ohio, ascertain to whom Box 828 is listed and endeavor to ascertain that individual's connection with instant organization, if any. It is suggested that this investigation be conducted in a discreet manner, as members will not talk if approached directly.

The CINCINNATI, Ohio, office will at Bellaire, Ohio, endeavor to ascertain the identity of Dr. Shepard and Mr. Claude Sutter, reputed heads of the Black Legion, and conduct such other investigation as they deem advisable.

The DETROIT, Michigan, office will at 15877 Indiana Ave., Detroit, ascertain the identity of the person who sent Bert Effinger mail from that address with a view to ascertaining whether or not the Black Legion has a completely equipped machine gun outfit in Detroit.

The DETROIT, Michigan, office will at 37 Campau St., Grand Rapids, ascertain who is sending Bert Effinger, of Lima, Ohio, mail from that address.

The CLEVELAND, Ohio, office will continue to investigate instant case along such lines as are deemed advisable for the purpose of ascertaining the identity of the members of the Department of Justice, who are reputed to be members of the Black Legion.

- P E N D I N G -

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER  
DIRECTOR

# Federal Bureau of Investigation

U. S. Department of Justice

Washington, D. C.

June 12, 1935

AGB:RD  
61-7398

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

Re: BLACK LEGION;  
NIGHT RIDERS;  
BULLET CLUB - Miscellaneous

Mr. Nathan .....  
Mr. Tolson .....  
Mr. Baughman .....  
Chief Clerk .....  
Mr. Clegg .....  
Mr. Coffey .....  
Mr. Edwards .....  
Mr. Glavin .....  
Mr. Ladd .....  
Mr. Lester .....  
Mr. Quinn .....  
Mr. Schilder .....  
Mr. Smith .....  
Mr. Tamm .....  
Mr. Tracy .....  
Miss Gandy .....

The Bureau was requested in a memorandum from Mr. William Stanley dated April 15, 1935 to conduct an investigation concerning an organization known as the Black Legion, allegedly existing at Lima, Ohio. This matter came to the attention of the Department through Mr. K. P. Aldrich, Chief Inspector, Post Office Department, Washington, D. C.

Investigation conducted by Special Agent C. E. Smith of the Cleveland Office disclosed that the Black Legion is a secret organization, originally formed prior to the Revolutionary War for patriotic purposes. The order subsequently disbursed, was re-assembled after the Civil War, and was recently again organized for the purpose of protecting the country against the various "sorts of isms" in the Government. It was ascertained that a Mr. Bert Effinger, commonly referred to as General, is the head of the organization at Lima, Ohio.

Former members of the Black Legion advised that membership in Allen County, Ohio had grown to about three thousand; that the organization as originally planned was of a patriotic nature; but at this time is distinctly revolutionary and is designed to obtain control of Governmental agencies. It is also stated by former members that about 80 per cent of the employees of the local Federal Emergency Relief Administration are members of the organization. Mr. Bert Effinger is reported to have stated that sixty or seventy employees of the Department of Justice are members, and that after a rumor had been spread that the Old Post Office Building was going to be destroyed by the legion, a Department of Justice man from Cincinnati, Ohio had conducted an investigation. Effinger is alleged to have reported that the "Agent" was about to join the legion. No further or definite information was obtained as to this matter.

RECORDED & INDEXED

JUN 19 1935

61-7398-8

JUN 14 1935

36

Information was also obtained that the legion has a fully equipped company of machine gunners and a battalion of members equipped with Army rifles at Detroit, Michigan. A .45 caliber Colt automatic pistol was obtained from a former member of the legion who is alleged to have received it in a raid on certain Catholics located in another county. The serial number of this gun was mutilated and efforts are being made by the Bureau to ascertain the number so that the origin thereof may be known.

It was learned, upon the resignation of members of this organization, that they and their families were harassed and threatened by the organization.

The Black Legion is organized in degrees known as the Foot Legion, Night Riders, Black Knight, Armed Guard and the Bullet Club. It is to be noted that the activities of the Bullet Club came to the attention of the Bureau in November, 1934 by a report of Post Office Inspector J. F. Cordrey who alleged a plot was being formed to destroy the Federal buildings. The plot was allegedly directed against the Federal Emergency Relief Administration by dissatisfied Communists. Investigation by Mr. Cordrey revealed that the rumors were unfounded; that an unemployment league known as the Bullet Club was engaged in a dispute involving religious questions.

The investigation of this matter is proceeding to determine the truth of the statements concerning the membership of the Department of Justice employees and to determine the origin of the .45 caliber Colt automatic pistol.

Respectfully,

*A. G. Berens.*

A. G. Berens.

35

RJA:MAM  
61-7398-9

RECORDED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

July 6, 1935

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL,  
MR. STEPHENS

With reference to the memorandum of Mr. Stanley dated April 15, 1935, which requested an investigation regarding an organization known as the Black Legion, alleged to be in existence at Lima, Ohio, there is forwarded herewith one copy of the report of Special Agent J. D. Cunningham, dated at Detroit, Michigan, on June 24, 1935.

You will be promptly furnished with copies of further reports in this matter.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.

Enclosure #307667

DECLASSIFIED BY 6080  
ON 9-30-77  
L E D / b j w

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES

10-3-77 013511, 146  
declassification

# UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO

FILE NO. 62-779

REPORT MADE AT <b>DETROIT, MICHIGAN</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>6/24/35</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>6/5,10,14/35</b>	REPORT MADE BY <b>J. D. CUNNINGHAM</b>
TITLE <b>BLACK LEGION NIGHT RIDERS BULIET CLUB</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>MISCELLANEOUS - Confidential</b>

DATE *10-3-75*  
**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:** John F. Scendahl, 15877 Indiana Avenue, employee American Blower Company, Detroit, Michigan, Employers state good worker with good record in that concern; born Sweden, naturalized American citizen. -P-

**REFERENCE:** Report of Special Agent C. E. Smith, Cleveland, Ohio, 5/24/35.

**DETAILS:** At Detroit, Michigan  
 The premises at 15877 Indiana Avenue were viewed by this writer, and it was ascertained that this is a modern two-family dwelling house.

At the Palmer Park Postal Station, William Stewart was interviewed and he stated that he would cooperate thoroughly in the matter and have the mailman delivering mail to the above premises make a discreet inquiry as to the occupants thereof. Mr. Stewart subsequently advised that Paul H. Davis resided in the lower apartment; that he has resided there for the past three years; that he is employed with the Michigan Title Company, is married, and is of the Roman Catholic Religion. Mr. Stewart further advised that John F. Scendahl has resided in the upper flat for a period of approximately 60 days; that this man is of Swedish nationality, is a naturalized American citizen, and is employed at the American Blower Company, Russell Street, Detroit. This man is of the Lutheran Religion. Due to the nature of this investigation and

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>W. L. Nicholson</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES <b>61-7293</b>	RECORDED AND INDEXED: <b>JUN 26 1935</b>
COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO: Bureau - 3 Cleveland - 3 Detroit - 2 ADC:VSS		ROUTED TO: <b>JUN 23 A.M.</b> BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	FILE <b>DECLASSIFIED BY 6080</b> <b>ON 9-20-77</b>

the fact that Paul H. Davis is a Roman Catholic, he was not investigated further.

At the American Blower Company, 6000 Russell Street, Mr. Abel, executive, was interviewed, and he stated that Mr. Scendahl had been employed by that concern since approximately last January; that as far as he knew he was a good worker. He stated that Mr. Kane was in charge of the employment records, and advised that this man be interviewed. Mr. Kane upon being interviewed stated that Scendahl was hired through the Engineering Department about the first of the year; that according to the records he was born April 21, 1898, is married and has no children but is at the present time supporting his mother. The records further showed that he was five feet six inches in height, 158 pounds, was naturalized June 16, 1924; that he was born in Sweden; that he owns realty valued at \$6,000 with a \$3600 coverage; and that he is a member of the Lutheran Emmanuel Church. This man's prior employers were:

1916 to 1919 - Gorbensen Axle Company, Cleveland, Ohio  
1919 to 1920 - Eaton Axle Company, Cleveland, Ohio  
1922 to 1934 - Dohlstrom Metallic Door Company, Jamestown;

and that he has been employed in his present position since January 16, 1935. A notation appears on the record to notify Mrs. Carl Stolpe, 15335 Roselawn Avenue, Detroit. In conclusion Mr. Kane advised that this man's immediate superior is Mr. Polk.

Mr. Polk upon being interviewed stated that this man is apparently a good worker, honest, conscientious; that he never speaks wildly nor has he shown communistic or radical tendencies; that he is apparently open and above board. Mr. Polk further stated that this man's duties at the company are those of a draftsman, and that the company is very well satisfied with his work. Mr. Polk advised that he would make discreet inquiries in an attempt to learn further information about this man's home life.

In all of the above interviews it was carefully explained to the employers of Scendahl that he was not implicated criminally in any way and that in all probability this man was not the one about whom information was sought. As report of reference requests that this investigation be made discreetly, no further contacts were made.

UNDEVELOPED LEADS: The Detroit Office at GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, 37 Campau Street, will ascertain who is sending mail to Bert Effinger, Lima, Ohio, from that address.

P E N D I N G



# UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **CLEVELAND, OHIO**

FILE NO. **62-779**

<b>DETROIT, MICHIGAN</b>	<b>DATE WHEN MADE: 7/6/35</b>	<b>PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: 6/28/35</b>	<b>REPORT MADE BY: S. L. FORNEY</b>
<b>TITLE:</b> 0 BLACK LEGION 0 NIGHT RIDERS 0 BULLET CLUB			<b>CHARACTER OF CASE:</b> MISCELLANEOUS - <u>Confidential</u>

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:**

37 Campus Street in Grand Rapids, Michigan, found to be the office address of the Richards Storage Warehouse, Transfer Lines, F. C. Oldham, Manager, and Marion Keller, Secretary, unable to give any clue as to the identity of person writing to Bert Effinger of Lima, Ohio. They have many employees, and Manager Oldham will attempt to locate the one corresponding with Effinger by inquiring of them under the pretense that mail has been returned from Bert Effinger to 37 Campus St.

**REFERENCE:**

Report of Special Agent C. E. Smith, Cleveland, Ohio, 5/24/35.

**DETAILS:**

**AT GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN**

Agent located the address of 37 Campus Street and found it to be the office entrance to the Richards Storage Warehouse and Transfer Lines. Miss Marion Keller advised that they employed approximately fifty persons and that they were all away at the time this Agent called, but that she could not give any idea as to the person writing the letter.

Mr. F. C. Oldham, the manager, later appeared, and he advised that he had had some trouble with labor leaders from Detroit attempting to organize his force and that he was continually on the look out for

<b>APPROVED AND FORWARDED:</b> <i>S. L. Forney</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE		<b>DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES</b> <b>61-7398-10</b>		<b>RECORDED AND INDEXED:</b> JUL 9 - 1935
<b>COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO:</b> 3 - Bureau 2 - Cincinnati 2 - Cleveland 2 - Detroit		<b>UNITED STATES</b> <b>JUL 8 - PM</b> <b>BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION</b> ROUTED TO: <i>ONE</i> / FILE		<b>CHECKED OFF:</b> <b>JUL 17 1935</b> <b>JACKETED:</b> <b>AGENCIES</b>

DECLASSIFIED BY 6042 ON 9-30-77

anything that may cause trouble with his laborers. He was unable to give any clue as to the possible identity of the person writing to Bert Effinger at Lima, Ohio, but advised that he would inquire among his employees, advising them that mail had been returned from Bert Effinger to his office address. Mr. Oldham was very co-operative with Agent and assured him that he would make every effort possible to learn the identity of the person writing the letter.

UNDEVELOPED LEAD:

The DETROIT OFFICE at Grand Rapids, Michigan, will again contact F. C. Oldham at 37 Campus St. at an early date to ascertain from him if he has any information as to the identity of the person writing from that address to Bert Effinger at Lima, Ohio.

P E N D I N G

FORM NO. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **CLEVELAND, OHIO.**

FILE NO. **62-933**

REPORT MADE AT <b>CLEVELAND, OHIO.</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>7-8-35</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>6-29-35 and 7-3-35</b>	REPORT MADE BY <b>W. L. BUCHANAN - C.E.</b>
TITLE <b>BLACK LEGION; NIGHT RIDERS; BULLET CLUB</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>MISCELLANEOUS - CONFIDENTIAL</b>

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS

Mr. [redacted] stated he was well-acquainted with Dr. Shepard; that he had known him for some fifteen or twenty years and considered him more or less a braggard. Mr. [redacted] First National Bank stated Dr. Shepard was a "big wind jammer"; that he did not consider him a leader among men. [redacted]

[redacted] advised Dr. Shepard was city health officer for the city of Bellaire, O.; that he had known him several years but considered him harmless; that he was of the opinion Dr. Shepard was a dope addict. Supt. of Mails Columbus, O. advised there is no post office box numbered 828 at Post Office Columbus.

-R.U.C.-

REFERENCE:

Report of Special Agent C. E. Smith, dated 5-24-35, Cleveland, Ohio.

DETAILS:

DETAILS:

AT BELLAIRE, OHIO.

Agent contacted Mr. [redacted] Bellaire, Ohio who advised that he had known Dr. Shepard for the past fifteen or twenty years; that several years ago Dr. Shepard was mixed up with the Klu Klux Klan and seemed to take an active part at that time; that Dr.

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

APPROVED AND FORWARDED <i>E. L. Connelley</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	62-7398-4	RECORDED AND INDEXED JUL 10 1935
COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO 2-Cleveland 2-Cincinnati	JUL 9 - FBI DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	CHECKED OFF JUL 15 1935
ROUTED TO: TWO SECT		

Shepard retained a large box in the post office but rarely ever received any mail other than monthly bills; that on several occasions while talking with Dr. Shepard the Doctor would state how he hated Catholics and all foreigners and that they should be run out of this country; that on one occasion, several years ago, Dr. Shepard made the remark that he was going to blow up the First National Bank Building in Bellaire because the president of the bank had been lending money to foreigners. Mr. [redacted] stated that he paid little attention to this statement as he knew Dr. Shepard was a boastful talker and he knew he didn't mean what he said.

Agent contacted Mr. [redacted] of the First National Bank, Bellaire, Ohio, who stated that he had known Dr. Shepard practically all his life; that he came from a good family who had lived in and around Bellaire for the past thirty or forty years; that Dr. Shepard had always been a big talker and was at one time connected with the Klu Klux Klan, several years ago but that he had heard nothing of the supposed organization which Dr. Shepard is now supposed to be organizing; that it was the general talk about town that Dr. Shepard was a big wind jammer and no one paid much attention to what he had to say.

Agent contacted [redacted] Bellaire, Ohio who stated he had known Dr. Shepard for several years; that Dr. Shepard was now employed as city health officer for the city of Bellaire, Ohio; that he knew Dr. Shepard was connected with the Klan several years ago but that he had no recent information about Dr. Shepard organizing a secret organization there. [redacted] stated that he had heard Dr. Shepard on several occasions cuss the Catholics but that as he had known him for several years and knew that he was harmless he paid no attention to what he had to say. [redacted] stated that several years ago when the Klan had their meetings which were held out in the country, usually upon some high hill that some of the members would shoot off bombs or loud cracking fire crackers and also light up a large red cross; that he had heard nothing of this until about three weeks ago at which time a band of gypsies were camping a few miles from Bellaire; that about midnight one night someone shot off several loud bombs and scared these gypsies into leaving the community; that he had heard that Dr. Shepard was the instigator of this, but couldn't say of his own knowledge.

Dr. Shepard is described as being:

Age:	50
Height:	5'10"
Weight:	170 lbs.
Mustache:	Smooth shaven
Hair:	Dark
Complexion:	Dark
Marital Status:	Married; one daughter 12 years old;

Address:

Bellaire Ohio.

[REDACTED] stated that there was no Mrs. Shepard in Bellaire; that Dr. Shepard had a sister whose name is Jenny Shepard, who works as a nurse in Dr. Shepard's office; that he had heard that Jenny Shepard was connected with the Women's Auxiliary of the Klu Klux Klan several years ago; that she was about 40 years old.

Agent made inquiry at the post office as well as at the city hall but was unable to locate Claude Sutter mentioned in reference report as being an assistant to Dr. Shepard. Claude Sutter is unknown in Bellaire, Ohio.

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent J. E. Thornton,

AT COLUMBUS, OHIO.

Agent contacted H. R. Burchfield, Clerk in the office of the Superintendent of the Mails, Columbus, Ohio, who informed agent that there is no post office box numbered 828. Mr. Burchfield took agent around to the Box section and showed that for purposes of convenience in sorting that the smaller boxes are arranged at the top and the larger boxes are arranged down low and that in the series of boxes that the numbers between 825 and 831 are omitted.

If any mail were sent to this box number at Columbus it could not be delivered and would eventually go to the "dead letter office."

REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO OFFICE OF ORIGIN.

# UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1		FILE NO. 100-779	
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO			
REPORT MADE AT DETROIT, MICHIGAN	DATE WHEN MADE 7/13/35	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 7/7/35	REPORT MADE BY S. L. FORTENBERRY
CHARACTER OF CASE BLACK LEGION NIGHT RIDERS BULLET CLUB			MISCELLANEOUS - CONFIDENTIAL

## SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

Marion Keller advised that Manager Oldham had been unable to find out identity of Person sending mail from 37 Campus Street in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to Bert Effinger at Lima, Ohio. Will notify Detroit Office if information is received.

RUC

## REFERENCE:

Report of Special Agent C. E. Smith, Cleveland, Ohio, May 24, 1935.  
Report of Special Agent S. L. Fortenberry, Detroit, Michigan, July 6, 1935

## DETAILS:

### AT GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

In the absence of Mr. F. C. Oldham, Marion Keller was contacted and advised that Mr. Oldham had been unable to ascertain the identity of the person writing to Bert Effinger at Lima, Ohio, and giving 37 Campus Street, at Grand Rapids, Michigan, as the return address. Miss Keller advised that the Detroit Office would be immediately notified in case they should find the identity of person using that address as a return address in corresponding with Bert Effinger. If information should at any time be sent to the Detroit Office, the Cleveland Office will immediately be furnished with same.

DECLASSIFIED BY 6080  
ON 9-30-77  
LEP/ma

REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO OFFICE OF ORIGIN

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES		RECORDED AND INDEXED JUL 16 1935	
APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>D. L. Nicholson</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	61-7347-12	CHECKED OFF: JUL 19 1935	
COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO: 3 - Bureau 2 - Cleveland 2 - Cincinnati 2 - Detroit SLF:JJK		BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION ROUTED TO: FILED	

CL:GJ  
61-7398

August 22, 1935.

Special Agent in Charge,  
Cleveland, Ohio.

RE: BLACK LEGION; NIGHT RIDERS;  
BULLET CLUB - Miscellaneous;  
~~Confidential~~

Dear Sir:

The Bureau file in the above entitled case indicates that this case is not receiving prompt investigative attention in your district.

This matter should be placed in line for early investigative attention and you should submit a report to the Bureau at the earliest possible date.

Very truly yours,

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF Declassification  
DATE 10-3-77

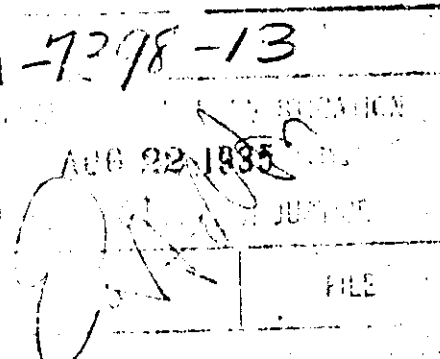
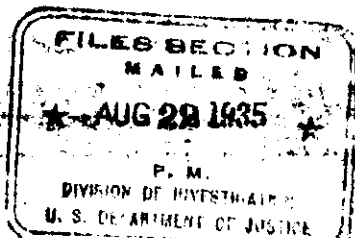
John Edgar Hoover,  
Director.

RECORDED

DECLASSIFIED BY 6080  
ON 9-30-77  
LED/bja

61-7398-13

AUG 22 1935



# UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT CLEVELAND, OHIO

FILE NO. 62-779

REPORT MADE AT: <b>DETROIT, MICHIGAN</b>	DATE WHEN MADE: <b>8/31/35</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: <b>8/20/35</b>	REPORT MADE BY: <b>N. E. MANSON</b>
TITLE: <b>BLACK LEGION NIGHT RIDERS BULLET CLUB</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE: <b>MISCELLANEOUS - CONFIDENTIAL</b>

**APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF 8/31/35**

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:**

Michigan State Police arrested three members of Black Legion after meeting held 8/19/35 near Adrian, Michigan. Concealed weapons, black gowns with skull hoods found in their possession. County Prosecutor, Adrian, Michigan, states he will prosecute on charge of carrying concealed weapons. -P-

**DETAILS:**

This investigation was made in response to the request of County Prosecutor L. B. Kuney, Adrian, Michigan, who advised that the Michigan State Police had arrested three men carrying concealed weapons and who claimed to be members of the Black Legion.

In a preliminary discussion with Sergeant G. W. Waterman of the East Lansing, Michigan, State Police, Sheriff Fred Seger, County Prosecutor L. B. Kuney and this Agent, the following facts were given by Mr. Kuney. For some months an organization known as the Black Legion, which has its main supporters in Detroit, Michigan, has held meetings in and around Adrian, Michigan, for the purpose of aiding this section of the country in its state wide and national organization. The meetings are held in the open air, out on prairies or clearings in the woods, away from the main highways. The meetings are held from the beginning of darkness until midnight. The police were told that a meeting was to be held on the night of August 19, 1935, and they trailed a car after the meeting and searched the occupants and car after being questioned. The State Police took the following men into custody: Elsworth S. Shinabery, 1576 Pasadena Avenue, Detroit, Michigan, age 40, occupation mechanic, Ford Motor Company, Badge #C4114, married, 5 feet 6 inches,

DECLASSIFIED BY 6060  
ON 7-30-37

PROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>[Signature]</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES	
COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO: Cleveland - 2 New York - 2 Detroit - 2 NEM:vss		<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <p>61-7378-14</p> <p>SEP - 3 A.M.</p> <p>BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION</p> <p>ROUTED TO:</p> </div> <div> <p>RECORDED AND INDEXED: SEP 4 1935</p> <p>CHECKED OFF:</p> <p>SEP 6 - 1935</p> <p>FILED:</p> </div> </div>	



126 pounds, Gray eyes, Andrew Martin Jr., 5064 Ridgewood Avenue, Detroit, Michigan, age 44, occupation clerk, not employed, single, 5 feet 6 1/2 inches, 140 pounds; Roy L. Hepner, 2205 West Euclid Avenue, Detroit, Michigan, age 46, occupation metal finisher, Paige factory, 5 feet 10 1/2 inches, 160 pounds, married; all men claiming to be American born citizens.

The following is the important property taken from the automobile of the above men and held at the Sheriff's office, Adrian:

- 1 .38 calibre Colt Police Positive Special revolver, #160290
- 1 6121 German Luger Automatic Pistol, mark Gesichert, with attached dagger and scabbard.
- 3 Black gowns with hood for head bearing skull and cross bones.

There were also various printed instructions similar to army instructions as to how many men were composed in a platoon, company, et cetera. There were orders for mobilization and plans of attack. Mr. Kuney stated the men admitted the suitcases belonged to them but not the contents; that the guns and other equipment were packed and merely handed down to them by higher officials whom they did not know; that these articles were for the purpose of holding the meeting. They admitted carrying the concealed weapons but insisted that they did not own them. There was also an address book in which was listed one Harry Davis, 775 Ferdinand Street, Detroit, Michigan. This individual was arrested on August 14, 1935, at Detroit, Michigan, charge carrying concealed weapons, Meeting, Black Legion, Detroit, Michigan. This was reported in the Detroit papers a few days before this investigation.

A prospective Black Legion member of Adrian, one [redacted] informed those present at the preliminary discussion that he was invited by one of his customers to attend a worthwhile meeting. [redacted] thought he would be taken to a cock fight or some such event but found an open air meeting of about 30 people, the leaders of which were wearing the gowns and masks. He explained that it was on the order of the Ku Klux Klan which organization thrived some years ago, except the purpose of this Black Legion seemed to be to protect citizens in uprisings which might develop or those in which the local law enforcement officials would fail to quell or handle in a proper manner. As an example, if a negro had raped a white girl the orders from those in command of the Black Legion might be such that they would deem it advisable to lynch the negro; therefore, it is necessary that every member have a gun in readiness for any call that may come from any part of the state of Michigan. [redacted] further stated that another prospective member, one Thomas Heinrich, has been threatened that he will be taken for a ride if he does not attend the meetings. Neither [redacted] nor Heinrich would become members and refused to sign the secret oath with their own blood which the commander of the Black Legion desired.

30

All members are given a bullet, which is a token of membership, and they are to conduct themselves so that it will never be necessary for the officials to ask for its return. [redacted] stated that he was told he would not be required to do any of the tough jobs as these jobs are handled by men imported from Toledo and also from Detroit.

After this preliminary discussion, one of the men arrested, Andrew Martin Jr., was called into the meeting for questioning. He insisted that he was an American citizen upholding the Constitution of the United States; that he had taken the secret oath in the Black Legion and could divulge no information regarding the individuals of the organization. He stated that even he did not know who the superior officers were as the orders came down the line similar to army orders. He further stated that their main objective was to combat communism, which was sweeping the country; that their oath in becoming a member of the Black Legion was only a renewal of their faith in the United States Government and upholding the principles embodied in the Constitution of the United States. As an example he mentioned that we are all familiar with United States history and that a body of men two hundred years ago had to take things into their own hands at Boston, Massachusetts, which resulted in the Boston tea party. He stated that within the last two or three years communism has become rampant throughout the United States and it was again time for the red blood of American patriots to take things into their own hands.

Martin stated that he had not worked since 1928 and keeps house for his mother; that most of the members were of the working class of people and respectable citizens and were interested in preserving order and dignity in the United States. At this point Agent informed County Prosecutor Kuney and Sergeant Waterman privately that he would submit the serial numbers of the guns for tracing. Kuney stated that he would commence prosecution on charges of carrying concealed weapons.

This report is for the information of the office of origin which office is conducting a confidential investigation into the activities of this organization.

**UNDEVELOPED LEADS:** The New York Office at HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, will contact the Colt Firearm Company and trace the ownership of the .38 Colt Police Positive Revolver, Serial 160290.

The Detroit Office at ADRIAN, MICHIGAN, will contact County Prosecutor L. B. Kuney and obtain the disposition of this case and any other pertinent information that was obtained through prosecution.

P E N D I N G

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1  
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **CLEVELAND, OHIO**

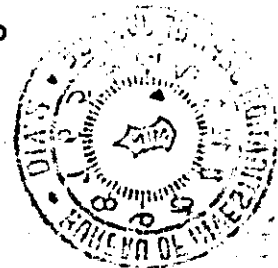
FILE NO. 62-3 ah

<b>CLEVELAND, OHIO</b>	<b>DATE WHEN MADE</b> 9-6-35	<b>PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE</b> 7/27;8/9,30/35	<b>REPORT MADE BY</b> C. E. SMITH
<b>TITLE</b> BLACK LEGION NIGHT RIDERS BULLET CLUB			<b>CHARACTER OF CASE</b> MISCELLANEOUS - CONFIDENTIAL

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:** Informant advises state committee recently investigated relief conditions in Lima and received complaints about Legion. Armed guards, members of the Legion, to be at polls on election day.

- P -

SEP 11 1935



**REFERENCE:** Report of Special Agent C. E. Smith, Cleveland, Ohio, dated 5-24-35.

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF *declassification*  
DATE *10-3-77* BJA/lye

**DETAILS:** AT LIMA, OHIO

Mr. [REDACTED] was interviewed and advised that recently a committee from the state legislature had been in Lima, Ohio, investigating relief conditions in Allen County and that during the investigation George Armstrong, a resident of Lima, and self-confessed member of the Black Legion, had appeared before the committee and stated that the Legion controlled all relief jobs in Allen County through Burt Effinger, head of the local Legion. Armstrong further stated that discrimination was shown in the manner in which relief jobs were issued, especially Catholics and colored workers.

<b>APPROVED AND FORWARDED</b> <i>J. MacArthur</i> <b>SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE</b>	<b>DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES</b> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>61 7398 10</span> <span>SEP 9 1935</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>SEP - 9 A.M.</span> <span>SEP 11 1935</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>DECLASSIFIED BY 6080</span> <span>ON 9-30-77</span> </div>	
<b>COPIES OF THIS REPORT</b> 2 - Bureau 3 - Cleveland <i>1cc - Leg. 9-11-35</i>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>SEP 11 1935</span> <span>SEP 11 1935</span> </div>	

62-3

On August 10, 1935, Special Agent in Charge J. P. MacFarland received a letter from [REDACTED] which is as follows:

[REDACTED]  
Lima, Ohio

August 9, 1935

Mr. J. P. MacFarland  
1448 Standard Bldg.  
Cleveland, Ohio

"Dear Sir:

"I have been doing some checking since you were here and have found out that on or about September 1, 1934, there were some guns stolen from the Allen Co. Historical Society, located in Memorial Hall, corner Elm and Elizabeth Streets, of this city.

"Am unable to get the numbers of these guns, as there is no record of that kind kept, but did obtain the make of the guns taken. There was one German officer's Luger; one German Sharpshooter's Luger and holster; one German sharpshooter's Mouser pistol; one American officer's pistol (Colt); one American officer's .45 automatic pistol; one D. A. .45 revolver; one .45 Smith and Weston; 2 German clips for pistol; 2 clips and 65 rounds of .45 ammunition. This equipment was taken from the case display of Major John H. Blattenberg.

"It is my understanding that some members of the Black Legion planned to get this equipment. I believe that it will be found that one Chas. Hartzog stole this equipment as this man, who is known to be a member of the Black Legion, works at Memorial Hall and could have very easily gotten this equipment.

"Have been unable to locate the gun dealer I was telling you about when you were here, but hope to do so soon. I understand that there is a man by the name of George Barrington, who is a member of the Black Legion, and lives on the northeast corner of Eureka and Jackson Streets, has a .45. automatic Colt and holster which he bought from a man who works at the White Mountain Creamery, whose name I have been unable to learn, but I understand this man sells quite a few guns. I talked to Mr. [REDACTED] a few days ago and he tells me that a Mr. [REDACTED] of this city, can tell you considerable about the maps of fortification of this country which Burt Effinger has in his possession. I made a few inquiries as to whether or not the Black Legion would have armed guards at election booths this coming election, primaries, and understand they will have. Of course, I do not know for sure, but in view of the fact that they have had in the past, it is reasonable to believe they will have this time. I believe that if you were to come down here and stay for a day or two we could get this all straightened out. I have been informed that Burt Effinger at a meeting some time ago displayed a card with several names on it and told the people

62-3

"at the meeting the names on the card were those of all federal men and their religions and that these men all reported to him when they came in town. Of course, I realize no federal man reports to him, but a lot of these folks here believe everything he says.

"I have moved from [REDACTED] directly

above [REDACTED]

"Must close and hope to see you soon or hear from you.

/s/ [REDACTED]

#### UNDEVELOPED LEADS

The CLEVELAND OFFICE at LIMA, OHIO, will discreetly interview Major John H. Blattenberg and endeavor to ascertain the numbers of the guns he had on display at the Allen County Historical Society and check same against the number of the .45 cal. Colt Automatic previously obtained and now in possession of the Bureau.

The CLEVELAND OFFICE at LIMA, OHIO, will interview Mr. [REDACTED] and obtain from him all information he has in his possession relative to maps of fortifications in the possession of Burt Effinger. In this connection it is suggested that Mr. [REDACTED] be contacted through [REDACTED]. Will also again interview [REDACTED] for the purpose of obtaining if possible the cards on which are the names of various federal agents. Will also ascertain the identity of the individual who is employed by the White Mountain Creamery, reported to be selling guns.

- P E N D I N G -

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

FORM NO. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

NY FILE NO. 62-5593

REPORT MADE AT NEW YORK CITY	DATE WHEN MADE 9/11/35	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 9/9/35	REPORT MADE BY WENE H. HEMRY
TITLE BLACK LEGION NIGHT RIDERS SUNSET CLUB			CHARACTER OF CASE <del>CONFIDENTIAL</del>

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

Colt Patent Firearms Manufacturing Company records show that .38 Colt Police Positive revolver #160290 sold to Standard Bros. Hardware Corp., Detroit, Mich., on March 17, 1926.

RUC

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
(S) OF *declassification*  
DATE *10-3-77*

REFERENCE:

Report of Special Agent N.E. Manson, Detroit, Michigan, dated August 31, 1935.

DETAILS

AT HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.

Mr. Robert Countney of the record department, Colt Patent Firearms Manufacturing Company, 17 Van Dyke Avenue, advised that .38 calibre Colt Police Positive revolver, serial No. 160290 (4 inch barrel) was sold by the Colt Company to the Standard Bros. Hardware Corporation,

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

APPROVED AND FORWARDED:	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	61-7398-16	RECORDED AND INDEXED SEP 12 1935
COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO		BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	CHECKED OFF SEP 13 1935
1 Bureau 2 Cleveland 2 Detroit 2 New York		DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	JACKETED
ROUTED TO		DECLASSIFIED BY <i>10020</i> ON <i>10-3-77</i>	

NY File 62-5593

Detroit, Michigan, on March 17, 1926.

UNDEVELOPED LEAD:

DETROIT OFFICE: At Detroit, Michigan, will make proper inquiry of Standard Bros. Hardware Corp. as to their sale of .38 Colt Police Positive revolver, serial #160290.

REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1  
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **CLEVELAND, OHIO**

FILE NO. 62-3 jjo

REPORT MADE AT <b>CLEVELAND, OHIO</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>10/1/35</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>9/22/35</b>	REPORT MADE BY <b>E. H. WILLIAMS</b>
TITLE <b>BLACK LEGION NIGHT RIDERS BULLET CLUB</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>MISCELLANEOUS - CONFIDENTIAL</b>

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:**

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both of Lima, Ohio, state that about a year and a half ago they saw a map supposedly of the secret fortifications of New York City and of the United States in the possession of Burt Effinger, leader of the Black Legion, and that Effinger said he was getting the maps through the U. S. Department of Justice and that they were very hard to get. No information obtained concerning identity of Special Agents of the U. S. Department of Justice who are supposed to belong. No information as to identity of person in White Mountain Creamery who is selling guns to members of Black Legion. Colonel Lapps, prominent at City Hall, Detroit, Michigan, supposed to be supplying guns also.

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES  
AND FIELD OFFICES  
ADVISED BY ROUTING  
SLIP(S) OF *Declassification*  
DATE *10-6-77*

-- P --

**REFERENCE**

Report of Special Agent C. E. Smith, Cleveland, Ohio, dated 9/6/35.

**DETAILS:**

AT LIMA, OHIO

Agent interviewed [REDACTED] as to what additional information he had concerning the facts of the instant case other than that contained in his letter to the Cleveland Office under date of August 9, 1935 and set out at length in the report of reference. Mr. [REDACTED] advised that he did not have any additional information stating that he had not been able as yet to ascertain the

APPROVED AND FORWARDED <i>J.P. MacFarland</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE <i>MEH</i>	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES	
COPIES OF THIS REPORT 3 - Bureau 2 - Detroit 3 - Cleveland  <i>1 ant. ag. mission</i>		61-7398-	7 OCT 3 - A.M. DECLASSIFIED BY <i>5580</i> ON <i>9-30-77</i>
		OCT 4 - 1935	OCT 9 - 1935
		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]



identity of the man who is employed at the White Mountain Creamery who is reported to be selling guns. He advised that he was unable to find out where the cards were that contained a list of Federal Agents that were supposed to be members of the Black Legion. He also informed Agent that Major John H. Blattenberg was deceased and it was from his collection which he had given to the Allen County Historical Society, that various guns were recently stolen. Mr. [redacted] advised that he believed these guns were stolen by a man by the name of Charles Hartzog who is a member of the Black Legion, a known radical, and he probably stole them for the purpose of arming some of the members of the Legion.

Mr. [redacted] located [redacted] who is employed as a [redacted] who advised Agent that he had been a member up until about fourteen months ago and shortly prior to that time he had seen a map of the secret fortifications of New York City in the possession of Burt Effinger, leader of the Legion in Lima; that Effinger kept it either in a safe in his basement or under the rafters of his home. He stated at the time that he procured these maps from the U. S. Department of Justice and they were very hard to get, it taking as much as eight months to purloin one. He stated that at the time he went into the Legion, Effinger had stated there were about sixty some Agents of the U. S. Department of Justice who were members and they reported regularly to him when they came to town. Mr. [redacted] was unable to give the name of any of the Agents who were supposed to be members. He also advised that at present information was that there were about 3200 members of the Legion in Allen County and they control the relief organization in Allen County.

Through [redacted] Agent contacted Mr. [redacted] who is a carpenter in Lima, Ohio, and who advised that he had joined the Black Legion about four years ago at the time it first started in Lima; that it was not the outgrowth of the Ku Klux Klan though most of the members of the latter organization had become members of the Legion. Mr. [redacted] advised that about eighteen months ago he had been to a meeting of the Legion in the old Ku Klux Klan Hall in Lima; that at that time Burt Effinger had possession of a map which he said was the secret fortifications of New York City; that Effinger stated there were some disappearing guns located underneath the Statue of Liberty. Mr. [redacted] advised that it required several men to hold it up for inspection; that when Effinger asked him, [redacted] to take hold of it he refused because he did not want to get "framed". At this time Effinger stated that he got the maps through the Department of Justice and it was very hard to get them; that often it took as much as six or eight months to obtain one. Mr. [redacted] stated that at the time he became a member, Effinger was saying there were nine Agents of the U. S. Department of Justice who were members of the organization, but had never heard any of the names.

As Agent was talking to Mr. [REDACTED] the name of "Upps" was mentioned, at which Mr. [REDACTED] advised that the name was not "Upps", but "Lupps"; that he was well known around the City Hall in Detroit, Michigan. He stated he had seen Colonel Lupps on several occasions and he seemed to be the one who was supplying most of the Black Legion with guns through his political connections at the City Hall in Detroit.

Mr. [REDACTED] was unable to throw any additional light on the present set-up of the Legion, but stated there was a city election coming up shortly and the contest was between the members of the Black Legion and those who were Catholics or were not members in the Legion.

Following this interview, Agent was contacted by [REDACTED] who advised that one of the candidates for the office of mayor in the city election, to be held in the near future in Lima, was Catholic and a bitter opponent of the Black Legion, and had stated to him that if a Government man with the proper credentials was to come to him, he had enough information to blast the Legion into Kingdom Come. He stated this candidate's name was William Murphy and he was employed in the local locomotive works. On first thought Agent intended to contact Mr. Murphy but later deemed it advisable that in view of the impending election in which there appears to be considerable strife developing, it would be wiser not to contact Mr. Murphy at the present time since it might involve the Bureau in a local political detriment.

Mr. [REDACTED] advised that other persons known to him as being members were:

Charles Long, City Solicitor, Lima, Ohio.

State Representative Meyers, Lima, Ohio.

Lieutenant Steen of the Erie Railroad Police, Lima, Ohio.

Mr. [REDACTED] also advised that he was the person who disarmed the Chief of Police of Lima, Ward Taylor, at the time he became a member of the Black Legion. He stated that [REDACTED] had told him a man by the name of Joe Louis, living near Lima, who was a former member, would be able to give some information.

Agent consulted Special Agent in Charge J. P. MacFarland, as to further steps to be taken in this investigation, since it is apparent that the only informants developed are those who were members some months back. It was discussed whether it would not be better to interview Burt Effinger, leader of the Legion, and ascertain the membership of the Black Legion and the character of the fortification map he is alleged to have in his possession. Agent was advised that in view of the fact the Bureau had requested a confidential inquiry, such a procedure, as suggested by Agent, should be referred to the Bureau for its decision. Agent was informed that such a reference would be made shortly by letter to the Bureau.